

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 CCO-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/PAB:RAPECK/MW

APPROVED BY NEA:ALATHERTON

S/S: - MR. BORG

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O 161902Z AUG 75 ZFF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DACCA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KABUL IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO IMMEDIATE

USLO PEKING IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL HONG KONG IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 195242 TOSEC 090013

EXDIS MILITARY ADDRESSEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, BG

SUBJECT: COUP IN BANGLADESH: SITUATION REPORT AS OF 1200

EDT, 16 AUGUST 75

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ATHENS FOR CODEL EAGLETON

1. DOMESTIC DEVELOPMENTS

-- NO ACTIVE RESISTANCE IS REPORTED WITHIN BANGLADESH 24
HOURS AFTER THE COUP. A CIVILIAN CABINET UNDER THE LEADER-
SHIP OF NEW PRESIDENT KHONDAKAR MUSHTAQUE AHMED HAS BEEN

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SWORN IN. NO PORTFOLIOS HAVE BEEN ANNOUNCED, BUT ALL ARE

HOLDOVERS FROM MUJIB'S CABINET OR PARLIAMENTARY LEADERSHIP.

-- THE NEW MINISTERS REPRESENT THE MODERATE AND CONSERVATIVE ELEMENTS OF THE FORMER AWAMI LEAGUE. THEIR PRESENCE IN THE NEW REGIME REINFORCES THE IMPRESSION THAT THE COUP WAS DIRECTED PRINCIPALLY AGAINST MUJIB AND HIS FAMILY AND AGAINST LEFTIST INFLUENCE IN MUJIB'S GOVERNMENT.

--THERE IS NO INDICATION YET WHAT ROLE, IF ANY, THE MILITARY MAY ASSERT; SO FAR THE CIVILIAN LEADERSHIP PROJECTS A PUBLIC IMAGE OF PLAYING THE PREDOMINANT PART.

--IN AN ADDRESS TO THE NATION, PRESIDENT AHMED JUSTIFIED THE MOVE AGAINST MUJIB ON THE BASIS OF THE CORRUPTION AND NEPOTISM OF THE PREVIOUS REGIME AND ITS FAILURE TO RAISE LIVING STANDARDS. HE REAFFIRMED THE BASIC OUTLINES OF

BANGLADESH'S PREVIOUS FOREIGN POLICY--NON-ALIGNMENT, FRIENDSHIP WITH ALL NATIONS, NORMALIZATION IN SOUTH ASIA.

--AHMED HINTED OF NEW DIRECTIONS, HOWEVER, IN ANNOUNCING HIS INTENTION TO TRY TO ESTABLISH RELATIONS WITH THOSE NATIONS WITH WHICH THERE WERE PREVIOUSLY NO DIRECT TIES--PRESUMABLY CHINA AND PAKISTAN. IN A DEPARTURE FROM MUJIB'S EMPHASIS ON THE SOVIET RELATIONSHIP, AHMED LUMPED THE UNITED STATES, THE SOVIET UNION AND CHINA TOGETHER IN EXPRESSING THE HOPE FOR CLOSER RELATIONS WITH THE "BIG POWERS."

2. INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

--PAKISTAN'S QUICK RECOGNITION HAS STOOD OUT IN THE ABSENCE OF MUCH COMMENT OR REACTION FROM ELSEWHERE. THERE IS NO INDICATION YET OF THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT'S ATTITUDE, AND MRS. GANDHI MAY BE WAITING TO SEE IF ANY RESISTANCE WILL DEVELOP. OUR CONGEN IN CALCUTTA HAS SEEN NO INDICATIONS THAT THE EASTERN COMMAND OF THE INDIAN ARMY HAS GONE ON ALERT.

--THE ENGLISH-LANGUAGE DAILIES IN DACCA CARRIED A BRIEF
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FOUR-PARAGRAPH REUTERS REPORT ON THE STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S REMARKS REGARDING THE COUP. HEADLINED "U.S. READY TO CONDUCT NORMAL DIPLOMATIC BUSINESS", THE ARTICLE CITES THE SPOKESMAN AS SAYING THE U.S. EMBASSY HAD NOT BEEN CONTACTED BY THE NEW RULERS BUT IF THE U.S. WERE APPROACHED IT WILL BE PREPARED TO CONDUCT NORMAL BUSINESS. OUR EMBASSY IN DACCA HAS NOT YET HAD ANY OFFICIAL CONTACT WITH THE NEW GOVERNMENT.

--A SHARPLY CRITICAL COMMENTARY OVER YUGOSLAV RADIO CHARACTERIZES THE COUP AS A BLOW TO NON-ALIGNMENT. IT LINKS THE COUP TO EFFORTS OF INTERNATIONAL IMPERIALISM TO UNSEAT MRS. GANDHI, A THEME WHICH MAY BE TAKEN UP BY OTHERS.

--PAKISTAN, APPARENTLY WITH AN EYE TO DISCOURAGING ANY POSSIBLE INDIAN MILITARY MOVES TO REVERSE THE COUP, HAS MOVED QUICKLY TO PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR THE NEW GOVERNMENT IN DACCA, INCLUDING:

(A) DIPLOMATIC RECOGNITION.

(B) A CALL TO OTHER ISLAMIC AND THIRD WORLD STATES TO RECOGNIZE. THE APPEAL WAS COINED IN A REFERENCE TO PAKISTAN'S 1971 DISMEMBERMENT BY INTERNATIONAL CONSPIRACY AND AGGRESSION.

(C) A GIFT OF 50,000 TONS OF RICE AND 15 MILLION YARDS OF CLOTH AS A FIRST GESTURE OF FRIENDSHIP. WE ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT BHUTTO MAY HAVE SENT A PRIVATE MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT AHMED IN WHICH HE PLEDGED THAT "PAKISTAN WILL RESOLUTELY UNDERTAKE EFFORTS TO UPHOLD AND DEFEND THE POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE, THE STATE SOVEREIGNTY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF BANGLADESH" (APPROXIMATE WORDING.)

3. FOR INFO ADDRESSEES: FOREGOING IS FOR YOUR BACKGROUND USE ONLY. SISCO

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT OVERTHROW, RECOGNITION, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 AUG 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE195242
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: RAPECK/MW
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750284-0312
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750845/aaaabnbt.tel
Line Count: 143
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <06 JUN 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <10 OCT 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: COUP IN BANGLADESH: SITUATION REPORT AS OF1200 EDT, 16 AUGUST 75 -
TAGS: PINS, PFOR, BG, PK
To: SECRETARY IMMEDIATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006